

Weekly Status & Information Report: Week of July 26, 2004

Emergency Ordinance: A copy of the recently passed emergency ordinance regarding AC units in rental properties was sent to landlords this week, informing them that 1) tenants can immediately re-install their own air conditioning units, 2) landlord owned AC units must be re-installed as soon as possible and that 3) Takoma Park landlords are exempt from the requirements of Section 26-6(a)(6) of Chapter 26 through October 24. Copies of the ordinance will be distributed to the affected buildings. *(Housing and Community Development)*

COLTA-Rent Increase Petitions (Wards 2, 4 and 6): Rent Increase Petitions are being processed for quite a few rental properties at this time. The larger buildings which have submitted petitions include 7777 Maple Avenue (hardship), Hampshire Towers - 7401/7333 New Hampshire Avenue (capital improvement), 10 Manor Circle (capital improvement), and 116 Lee Avenue (capital improvement). Letters were sent to the tenants, informing them of their rights in regard to rent increase petitions. The Office on Landlord-Tenant Affairs is receiving quite a few calls from the tenants and expect that they may contact Council members as well. You may refer all questions to either Linda Walker (ext. 7222) or Jean Kerr (ext. 7216 after 8/9) *(Housing and Community Development)*

ezStorage (Ward 6): On Thursday, the Montgomery County Planning Board approved the ezStorage site plan with conditions. These conditions are consistent with the City staff's recommendations regarding the site. The developer has indicated that they do not have any problems with the conditions. The resolution passed by the Council in support of the development was presented by staff to the Planning Board. *(Housing and Community Development)*

New Lead Poisoning Prevention Requirements: The City has been notified that effective October 1, 2004, it must monitor local rental property owners to ensure compliance with state regulations regarding lead paint. Monitoring includes verification of the submission of written documentation to the Maryland Department of the Environment that the property is exempt under the lead risk reduction provisions of the legislation or, if not, it has been inspected and appropriately registered with the State. Staff is exploring the impact of the new requirement on operations and existing procedures and will report back to the Council later this summer. For more information on lead poisoning prevention requirement, please check the Maryland Department of the Environment's web site.
<http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/landprograms/leadcoordination/index.asp> A recent Washington Post article on the experience of a local property owner in their efforts to abate lead paint at their home may also be of interest.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A21520-2004Jul28.html> *(Housing and Community Development)*

Main Street Training (Wards 1 and 3): The Old Takoma Business Association and the State of Maryland Main Street staff will be conducting a two-day "basic training" for the Takoma Park Main Street program on Tuesday, August 10 (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) and Wednesday, August 11 (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). The training will be held on the second floor of the municipal building and is open to the public. Committee volunteers are encouraged to attend all of the sessions or to just those sessions which address their specific area of interest. For more information, contact OTBA's Executive Director, Mary Stover at marystover@takomaonline.com or 240-253-4229. *(Housing and Community Development)*

Affordable Housing: Energy costs continue to rise. On September 17, there will be an "Energy Assistance Expo" sponsored by the Montgomery County Office of Home Energy Programs, at the Gwendolyn Coffield Community Center in Silver Spring. Residents who pay utilities, either separately or as a part of their rent, can apply for assistance with their gas, electric or heating fuel bills. To learn more, residents should bring a photo ID, their lease or mortgage invoice, proof of income and energy bills to the expo. For further information, please contact the Office of Home

Energy Programs at 240-777-4450 or call Linda Walker (ext. 7222). (*Housing and Community Development*)

Takoma DC Development Projects: At the Old Takoma Business Association meeting last week, OTBA Board Member and Takoma DC Advisory Board Member Faith Wheeler provided an update she prepared on proposed development in Takoma DC. A copy of the update is attached. Additional information can be found on the Historic Takoma website <http://www.historictakoma.org/programs/historic/2004-Dev.htm> (*Housing and Community Development*)

Carroll Avenue Streetscape Project (Wards 1 and 3): The Carroll Avenue Streetscape Project was presented to and reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission for a historic area work permit. Historic Takoma testified on the behalf of the project. The permit was approved with the condition that Commission staff review and stamp the final construction documents. (*Housing and Community Development*)

Montgomery College Master Plan (Ward 1): The Takoma Park City Council and the Montgomery County Planning Board will be reviewing the Montgomery College Facilities Master Plan through the fall. This Master Plan describes how the College proposes to renovate its existing campus in Takoma Park and build its new Cultural Arts Center at Georgia and Rte 410 (Burlington St) and its King Street Arts Center in the old Giant Bakery. Copies of the plan have been received by City staff and copies will be made available to the public, placed on the City's web site and distributed to community organizations and other interested persons over the next few weeks. It is likely that the plan will come before the City Council in early October, for discussion and public comment. Council was presented with an overview of the plan last January. (*Community and Government Liaison*)

Old Takoma Development Project - Proposed Restaurant on Laurel Avenue (Ward 1): John Urciolo's redevelopment project on Laurel Avenues - the new restaurant next to the Pizza Movers building - was presented before the Historic Preservation Commission on Wednesday, July 28. The proposal was well received with Historic Takoma testifying on behalf of the project. Approval of the proposal will allow the owner to proceed with the planning review process, learn what the parking requirements will be for the new building, and facilitate further discussion on the proposed parking facility. (*Housing and Community Development*)

Pedestrian Bridge Opening (Ward 1): Mayor Porter, City Councilmember Joy Austin-Lane and County Councilmember George Leventhal were some of the many officials and community leaders present at the opening of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Metro tracks from Fenton Street to Jesup Blair Park. The bridge is open to the public and helps connects the Takoma Park campus of Montgomery College with the new Health Sciences Building on Georgia Avenue. (*Community and Government Liaison*)

City Newsletter on the Web: The City Newsletter is now posted to the City Web site (www.cityoftakomapark.org; click on TP Newsletter on the left hand side). The Newsletter is a fairly large Adobe PDF file. While it is rather large to download for those with dialup internet connections, it works quite well with high speed internet, and was extremely easy to post. We are soliciting feedback from users of this feature to determine future actions. (*Communications*)

City Engineer: The new City Engineer, Ali Khalilian, started work on Monday, July 26. He can be reached via phone at 891-7620 and email AliK@takomagov.org. (*Public Works*)

Street Restoration: This week the contractor has been working on concrete improvements along Maple Avenue from Sherman to Hilltop Avenue. This will continue through next week. (*Public Works*)

New K-9. The police department has acquired a second German Shepherd dog in order to replace the previous K-9 who retired with his handler, Corporal Scott McAuley, last fall. Cpl. Doug Malarkey has been selected as the new handler and will begin a four-week training session August 2, 2004. *(Police Dept.)*

Police Training: Carol Bannerman and Sgt. Kurt Gilbert are attending a four-day CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) conference in Buffalo, New York. Captain Coursey and Lt. Cipperly attended a two-day (no cost) training entitled "practical management", hosted by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission. Topics such as legal issues, ethics, leadership and internal complaints were presented by experts in the field. *(Police Dept.)*

Takoma Park Film Festival: The official deadline for submitting films for the next Takoma Park Film Festival is August 1. Screeners will begin their work of viewing submissions and selecting films for the festival this weekend. Submissions may still be dropped off at the Library during open hours today and Saturday, and entry forms are available there as well. *(Library)*

New Library Staff: Lucia Acin Andion has joined the Library staff as a Library Assistant, replacing Susan Lisle. Lucia has an undergraduate degree in Library Science from her native Spain, and has worked both in public libraries in Spain and in the Hispanic Division of the Library of Congress. *(Library)*

Philosophers' Club: Chris Phillips brings his popular Philosophers' Club back to the Library on Wednesday, August 4, at 7:30 p.m. Chris is the author of "Socrates Café", "A Fresh Taste of Philosophy" and "Six Questions of Socrates." He is nationally known as a teacher of philosophy for children. Wednesday's discussion is planned for kids 8 and older, parents and other interested adults. *(Library)*

Modular Shelving: The Library has new modular shelving for its beginning readers in the Children's Room, a gift of the Friends of the Library. *(Library)*

'Mike Morrissey Mulligan Madness Golf Tourney': The 3rd annual 'Mike Morrissey Mulligan Madness Golf Tourney' will be held August 23. at the Redgate Golf Course in Rockville. For the past three years, the Takoma Park Library has been the recipient of all proceeds from these annual tournaments, which are held in memory of Mike Morrissey, a former Library patron. Entry and sponsorship forms and additional information about the event is available at the Library. *(Library)*